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A. E. VOORHIES, Pub. and Prop. WILFORD ALLEN, Editor.

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 1916.

OREGON WEATHER

Fair tonight, Saturday and Sunday; warmer tonight east portion; northerly winds.

ABUSING A PRIVILEGE.

Members of congress are accorded many privileges, all of which are supposed primarily to be for their use as members of the chief law-making body of the country, not as individuals. But the privilege is being grossly at the expense of the general public, rather than for its benefit. When a member has served a period of years in the lower branch of the national legislature and begins to think he carries the weight of the world upon his shoulders, he is filled with an ambition to go up a notch and sit with the senators. Then he is tempted to abuse more of the privileges that he is given in the house of his Uncle Samuel. Such a condition is brought to mind with the mooding of the mails during the last few days with congressional documents intended to advance the political interests of one Hon. Wm. E. Humphrey, member of the lower house from the state of Washington. Mr. Humphrey has been a competent congressman, and his ambition is laudable, but it is the top-notch of absurdity that there should be read into the record, printed with the resources of the federal government and distributed under the frank of a fellow member from the state of Tennessee, pages of laudatory things said only to boost the political fortunes of an individual. Mr. Humphrey is not the only transgressor in this respect. There are others. And the abuse mentioned is only one of scores of abuses that ought to be curbed. They are even more flagrant than the annual distribution of seeds through which some congressmen seek to keep themselves advertised before their constituency, and which, so long as it is the order, is made use of by all the members.

PUTTING ONE OVER ON THE YANK.

Twenty-five million dollars seems like a pretty big sum of money to pay for the three islands in the Danish West Indies, in view of both the previous negotiations about them and the going rate of prices for territory acquired by the United States. In fact, it looks as if the Danes are better traders than the shrewd Yankees in this particular matter. Dicker for the islands has been going on for half a century. President Johnson offered \$7,500,000 for St. Thomas and St. John in 1867, France having at the time a claim on Santa Cruz which it refused to waive. The Danish parliament unanimously voted to accept the offer, but the United States senate repudiated it on behalf of the United States. In 1902 another treaty for purchase was signed. It was ratified by the American senate, the price this time being \$5,000,000, but it was rejected by the Danish landsting twice. With an offer of \$5,000,000 refused by Denmark and another of \$7,500,000 accepted, it is hardly good business for the United States now to raise the offer to \$25,000,000. A canny horse trader wouldn't jump his bid that way. He would find out first if he couldn't get the goods

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Glancing back over the quotations on acquired territory, too, the present figure appears to be extremely high. The three islands for which it is offered have an area of about 138 square miles. We got Florida from Spain for \$5,000,000; it has 58,680 square miles. Louisiana, which has about 875,000 square miles and comprises almost one-third of the present area of the United States, cost \$15,000,000. It contains part or all of the present states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and Oklahoma. The price of Alaska's 590,000 square miles was \$7,200,000. Certainly, the proposal to spend on 138 square miles of doubtfully valuable land nearly twice as much as we paid for practically all the United States between the Mississippi and the Rockies is hardly in keeping with Uncle Sam's reputation for being a keen trader.

The present administration of the United States seems to have lost all idea of the value of money. It has been spending more for everything than any previous government dreamed of paying out. On top of the recklessly wasteful appropriations by this and the preceding congress the proposal to give \$25,000,000 for what \$7,500,000 had been previously accepted is no doubt in line with recent methods, but it indicates that the time is at hand to have a guardian appointed for our spendthrift national daddies. It is pretty generally understood that Denmark wants to get rid of its West Indian holdings, and that they are costing it somewhere around \$200,000 a year. Why need we be so ridiculously extravagant in offering to take a bad bargain off its hands? It is questionable whether we need the Danish West Indies since the acquisition of Porto Rico, but if we must have them, let us retain some of our traditional shrewdness in getting them.—Detroit Free Press.

MORE DYNAMITE
SUSPECTS ARRESTED

San Francisco, Aug. 4.—Six new suspects face arrest today in connection with the recent bomb outrage. Deputy District Attorney James Brennan made this announcement today, and followed it with instructions to the special bomb squad to renew activity.

"The ring is larger than we at first suspected," said Brennan. "There were many fingers in the pie, al-

though some of those involved played only a minor part and had no idea, probably, of what the finale of their plotting would be. Our mass of circumstantial evidence is growing daily and involving more and more people."

Investigation of the activities of several well known anarchists continued and police predicted the deportation of a number of foreigners.

45,000 SEAMEN
MAY SOON STRIKE

New York, Aug. 4.—Unless demands now before shipping companies are granted, the International Seamen's union, with a membership of 45,000 on the great lakes, the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, will strike "when the big four railroad brotherhoods go out," as the latter threaten to do. This announcement was made to the United Press by G. D. Brown, secretary of the international union.

"We have long had our plans laid," said Brown. "We also have long had grievances that must be remedied. To strike at a time when every mile of railroad track in the country is rusting through non-use would be the best time for us to win."

Cleveland, Aug. 4.—Ten thousand lake seamen may strike with the four railroad brotherhoods if the trainmen decide to call a nation-wide strike, George Martin, business agent of the Lake Seamen's union, declared here today.

"National officers of the Seamen's Union will come from New York tomorrow for a conference with the local union," Martin said. "We are determined to bring about abolition of the blacklist and get wage increases."

Martin stated that it is very probable demands of the seamen will be formulated and presented to shippers about the same time the conference in New York brings the railroad situation to a climax.

BROTHERHOODS GET
IMPORTANT POINT

Washington, Aug. 4.—Railroad brotherhoods won an important point before congress today when the senate interstate commerce committee tabled a resolution looking toward mediation of the controversy by the interstate commerce commission.

The railroads and the national chamber of commerce had requested an investigation of the whole wage subject. The brotherhoods opposed this on the ground that the strike was purely a matter between themselves and the railroad officials.

Not only did the committee take the workers' side of this question but it refused a request by the chamber

of commerce for hearings on the subject.

A vote was not taken, but an informal canvass of the committee showed the members apparently unanimous that congress has not power to enforce arbitration unless both railroad and men desire it.

It was further agreed that the committee at present has no inclination to mix in the struggle.

The resolution tabled was one introduced July 22 by Senator Newlands at the request of the chamber of commerce of the United States, directing the interstate commerce commission to investigate and, as soon as practicable, to report to congress regarding the wages and hours of service of each class of railroad employees.

At today's meeting a letter from the chamber of commerce of the United States, requesting a hearing upon this resolution, and a letter from the railroad brotherhoods, opposing it, were considered.

Senator Newlands said the committee deemed it inadvisable to add to the present duties of the interstate commerce commission.

OREGON MILITIA
LEARNING WAR

Headquarters Oregon National Guard, Calexico, Cal., Aug. 4.—The last military contingent from Oregon to arrive in camp is today learning what war is and despite vociferous protests the recruits go about all day with loads of more than 100 pounds on their backs. The contingent consisted of mules, not men.

Sixty unbroken mules, after throwing most of the "cow punchers" who sought to break them, now vainly strive to buck 100 pounds of "pack" which has been securely strapped to their backs. The bucking performance has become a daily exercise, while militiamen stand aside and smile, watching the "bronks" break themselves. Sixteen have already been tamed and are doing useful service.

SEVERE FIGHTING
AT VERDUN FRONT

London, Aug. 4.—Their Verdun campaign imperilled by French gains northeast of the fortress city, the Germans struck back with a most powerful counter-blow on the Fleury-Thiaumont front last night and early today.

The German war office this afternoon announced the recapture of the village of Fleury by the German crown prince's legions in fighting early this morning. The Germans at the same time admitted that the village had been wrested from their hands in yesterday's desperate fighting.

The French war office issued a statement at noon admitting that the Germans had penetrated the southern portion of Fleury in a heavy attack with dense formations. The French are clinging desperately to the outskirts of the town, Paris claimed, and holding the station southeast of Fleury.

At one stage of last night's furious



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fighting the French recaptured the Thiaumont redoubt northwest of Fleury, but subsequently were driven out by German artillery fire.

On the Somme front, where the allies are conducting their greatest offensive, only minor operations, with some slight British gains west of Pozieres, were reported to the British war office.

Berlin announced the repulse of all British and French attacks.

The Russian army advancing on Kovol has scored a fresh success, it was claimed at Petrograd today. The Slavs crossed the Stochod river near Lubecho, capturing a series of fortified heights and captured the village of Rudka Mirinskala, twenty miles from the railway center of Kovol.

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